

**Statement of Chairman Charles E. Schumer**  
**U.S. Senate Committee on Rules and Administration**  
**Confirmation Hearing – June 10, 2009**  
*John J. Sullivan to be a Member of the Federal Election Commission*

The Rules Committee shall come to order. Good Afternoon.

I'd like to thank my friend, Ranking Member Bennett for his extraordinary efforts to be available this afternoon. I know both our schedules are busy this week, but I am hopeful this hearing will be completed within the hour.

Today we're here to have a confirmation hearing for John J. Sullivan to be a Member of the Federal Election Commission. Welcome, Mr. Sullivan, it's nice to see you. I know your family is in attendance this afternoon, and I would like to welcome them as well.

On May 4, 2009, Mr. Sullivan was nominated by President Obama to serve on the FEC for a single term expiring on April 30, 2013. If confirmed, Mr. Sullivan would replace Commissioner Ellen Weintraub.

The Rules Committee oversees issues related to our democratic process, such as Federal elections and campaign finance. So far this Congress, our hearings have focused primarily on election- related issues, such as our outdated registration system and problems faced by overseas voters.

Today, we will shift gears and focus on the Federal Election Commission, an agency this Committee has had oversight over since its creation in 1975.

Holding FEC confirmation hearings is one of our most important tasks. I look forward to hearing from our most recent nominee, Mr. Sullivan, on how he will support the mission of the FEC, and what he sees as his greatest assets and challenges in this role.

Since the FEC's creation, the administration of our elections has dramatically evolved. Though the FEC's primary mission remains the same – to administer and enforce campaign finance law – doing so has become complicated by the multitude of ways campaigns and outside organizations fund election

activities. As more and more money is spent on political campaigns, the FEC's role in monitoring the use of funds in campaigns becomes increasingly important.

Recently, there has been much attention paid to the 3-3 split on votes by the FEC Commissioners on many key issues. Consistent deadlocks on important decisions, including advisory opinions and enforcement matters and regulations, leave these matters unresolved.

The seamless functioning and well-being of the FEC is of utmost importance. And there will come a time for this Committee to look into these issues. Yet today, we focus solely on Mr. Sullivan's qualifications and how he envisions his role at the FEC.

Mr. Sullivan has had a long and distinguished legal career. And his background is also very special, and not just because of his New York heritage. He comes to us as the son of two hard-working parents.

He was the first person in his family to attend college, and received his bachelor's degree at the University of Massachusetts. Mr. Sullivan then attended Northeastern University, where he received his law degree in 1981. Since then, he has worked as a legal counsel for several unions, including the International Brotherhood of Teamsters and, most recently, the Service Employees International Union, where he handled election-related and campaign finance matters.

Mr. Sullivan also has extensive experience in election administration, and since 2007, has served as a member and vice president of the Montgomery County Board of Elections in Maryland.

Mr. Sullivan, you have quite a record dealing with elections, and we all look forward to hearing your testimony today.